



Australia's Enterprise AI Adoption: Where the Work Gets Harder



Australia's national AI agenda is taking shape, but the challenges inside organisations are different. Here, progress depends on how well enterprises can integrate AI into existing systems, processes and responsibilities, while managing the costs, risks, and organisational changes that come with deployment.

5 trends emerge in Australian enterprises' approach to AI adoption and implementation.

1. AI Strategy & Business Integration

Central oversight can establish priorities, allocate resources and set common guardrails, but it does not guarantee that AI is changing how the business operates.

INTEGRATION OF AI INTO BUSINESS STRATEGY IN AUSTRALIA

11%

AI experimentation
without a coordinated
strategy

27%

Emerging AI priorities
shaped by team-level pilots
& use cases

45%

Cross-enterprise
coordination of AI priorities,
with central oversight

17%

AI embedded in
business strategy

Source: Ecosystem, 2026

Leaders must define the business outcomes they expect from AI and account for the resources and organisational changes needed to achieve them.

2. AI Adoption & Deployment Maturity

AI initiatives move into production when they demonstrate business value and have clear ownership, manageable risks, and a viable path to integration and ongoing support.

STAGES OF AI ADOPTION IN AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS

42%

**Planning/ testing/
running PoCs**

21%

**Piloting AI in specific
business functions**

18%

**AI used within specific
business functions**

20%

**AI used across
multiple functions or
enterprise-wide**

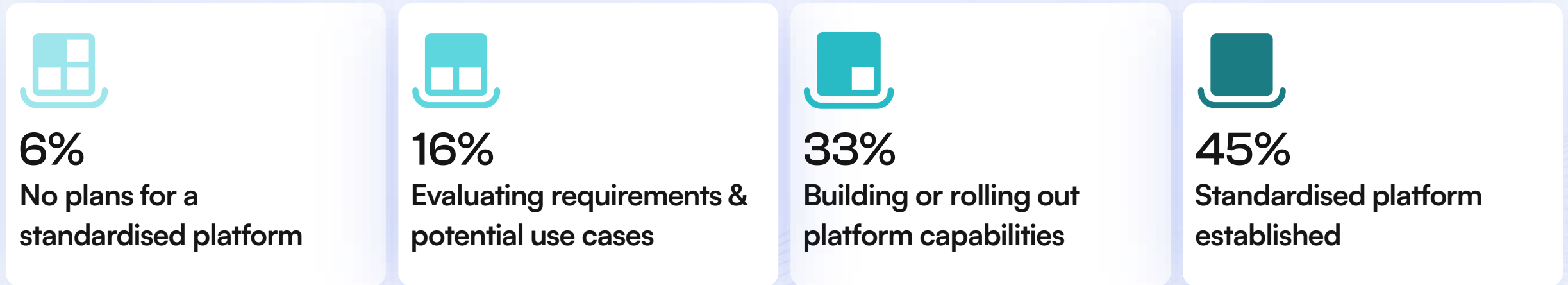
Source: Ecosystem, 2026

Moving beyond pilots requires more than evidence of business value: teams need the resources to integrate AI into existing workflows and the organisational support to change how work gets done.

3. Standardised AI Deployment Capabilities

Many Australian organisations are investing in standardised AI platforms, creating a foundation for more consistent deployment, integration, security, and ongoing management.

USE OF PLATFORMS FOR AI DEPLOYMENTS IN AUSTRALIA



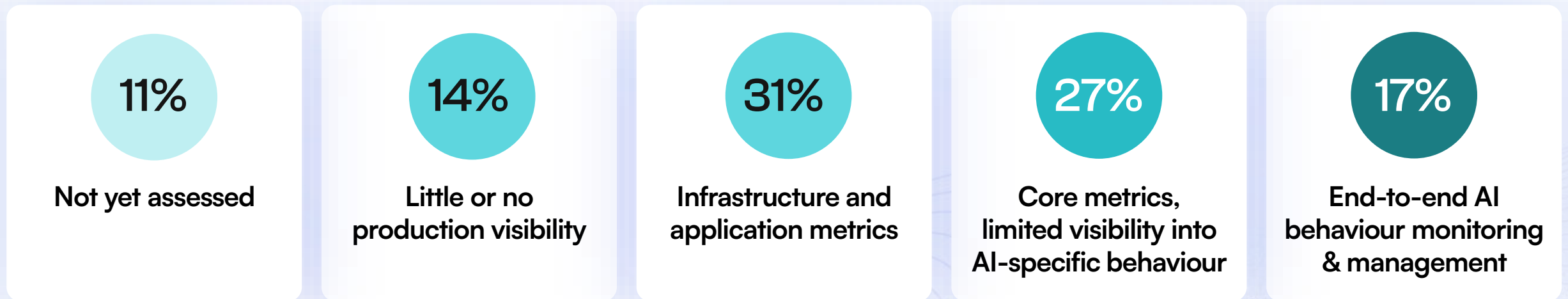
Source: Ecosystem, 2026

Reusable integration capabilities are a practical priority. These should address recurring needs across business units while preserving clear accountability for individual applications.

4. AI Lifecycle Management

Monitoring AI in production requires visibility into model behaviour, inputs and outputs, performance, and system dependencies — not just infrastructure health.

MATURITY OF AI LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT IN AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS



Source: Ecosystem, 2026

Many organisations have limited insight into how applications perform once deployed. Leaders need monitoring that covers the AI lifecycle, including output quality, drift, dependencies and emerging risks.

5. Responsible AI Governance

AI governance requires more than policies: organisations need clear accountability, risk controls and oversight that extend into production.

MATURITY OF AI GOVERNANCE IN AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS

20%

No formal AI governance considerations

33%

Policies & guidelines under development

38%

Formal AI policies & guidelines

9%

Established governance model with defined oversight & accountability

Source: Ecosystm, 2026

Organisations need to translate policies into risk-based approvals, accountable ownership, ongoing monitoring and incident response, including for third-party AI systems. Oversight should be proportionate to the potential consequences of AI failure.

Barriers to AI Adoption

The barriers span technology, funding, skills and organisational change, explaining why progress in strategy does not always translate into effective deployment and ongoing management.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES OF AI ADOPTION IN AUSTRALIA



50%

Disconnected tools
& systems



42%

Insufficient budget or
internal resources



41%

Resistance to
changing established
ways of working

Source: Ecosystem, 2026

Investment in shared capabilities, skills and workflow redesign should target the bottlenecks that affect multiple initiatives, with budgets accounting for integration and ongoing support as well as initial development.

Ecosystem Opinion

WHAT LEADERS SHOULD PRIORITISE



Invest based on evidence

Progress AI initiatives against clear criteria for value, risk, integration, and ongoing cost.



Build shared capabilities

Prioritise common needs across deployment, integration, monitoring, and governance.



Define accountability

Clarify ownership of business outcomes, technical delivery, and risk oversight throughout the AI lifecycle.

The goal is to move viable AI initiatives into production with the capabilities, ownership, and controls to sustain them.

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info@ecosystem.io



www.ecosystem.io